

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EURE-00 CIAE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

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FM AMCONSUL PONTA DELGADA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1366

AMEMBASSY LISBON PRIORITY

INFO USMISSION NATO

DIA WASHDC

CINCLANT NORFOLK VA

COMUSFORAZ LAJES FLD AZ

USCINCEUR

USCMR SHAPE BRUSSELS BEL

C O N F I D E N T I A L PONTA DELGADA 481

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, PINS, PO

SUBJ: AZOREAN AUTONOMY

REF: A. LISBON 7627; B. PONTA DELGADA 478 (NOTAL)

1. WE DO NOT BELIEVE JUNTA WILL BRING AUTONOMY ISSUE TO A HEAD BEFORE WEEK OF DECEMBER 29 WHEN JUNTA MEMBERS RETURN FROM A CHRISTMAS RECESS. GENERAL MAGALHAES IS DUE BACK IN THE AZORES SOMETIME THAT WEEK, BUT THE JUNTA MEMBERS WOULD NOT HESITATE TO ACT IN HIS ABSENCE IF THEY FELT NECESSARY. THE JUNTA ISSUED A COMMUNIQUE STATING THAT THE GOP HAS AGREED TO RECONSIDER THE DECREE LAW, AND THAT HAS SATISFIED THE PUBLIC FOR THE TIME BEING.

2. PPD DEPUTY VIVEIROS, WHEN SPEAKING OF AGREEMENT ON AUTONOMY IN THE CONSTITUTION, WAS REFERRING TO PRINCIPLE, NOT TO THE DETAILS OF AUTONOMY WHICH ARE UNDER CONSIDERATION OF THE EIGHTH COMMITTEE OF THE CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY. MOST AZOREANS INCLUDING PPD LEADERS, ARE NOT SATISFIED WITH DRAFT ARTICLES ON AUTONOMY
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WHICH WERE PUBLISHED HERE. AZOREAN PPD LEADERS HAVE SEVERAL TIMES

MENTIONED THEIR PLANS TO WORK FOR A REVISION OF THOSE DRAFT ARTICLES.

3. AZOREANS, INCLUDING JUNTP MEMBERS, ARE SKEPTICAL OF PROMISES FROM THE GOP AND THE PROVISION IN THE DECEMBER 16 DECREE LAW FOR REVISION AFTER PROMULGATION OF THE CONSTITUTION MEANS LITTLE TO THEM. IF THE GOP DOES NOT CHANGE THE DECREE LAW, THEN THE JUNTA MEMBERS PLAN TO RESIGN WHICH IN TURN WOULD TRIGGER POPULAR DEMONSTRATIONS. THE UNSPOKEN HOPE IS THAT DEMONSTRATIONS WOULD FORCE THE GOP TO RELENT ON THIS ISSUE. WE BELIEVE THE AZOREAN LEADERS WCLL TRY EVERYTHING POSSIBLE SHORT OF UDI TO PERSUADE THE GOP TO GRANT THEM THE EXTENSIVE AUTONOMY THEY WANT. BUT IF THE GOP PERSISTS IN DENYING THIS, AZOREANS MAY RELUCTANTLY COME TO THE CONCLUSION THAT THEY HAVE NO CHOICE EXCEPT INDEPENDENCE.

4. NOTE: IN THE LAST WEEK, THE CDS HAS BEEN HOLDING MEETINGS ALL OVER SAO MIGUEL TO DISCUSS THE DRAFT STATUTE OF AUTONOMY AND THE CDS PROPOSAL FOR A TYPE OF COMMONWEALTH STATUS FOR THE AZORES. THE LOCAL CDS LEADER TOLD US THAT INFORMAL POLLS CONDUCTED AT THESE MEETINGS SHOWED OVER 90 PERCENT FAVORED THE CDS SUPPORTED PROPOSAL FOR A REFERENDUM ON INDEPENDENCE. ON THE QUESTION OF AUTONOMY, COMMONWEALTH STATUS OR INDEPENDENCE, FEW WANTED AUTONOMY, THE GREAT MAJORITY WAS EVENLY SPLIT BETWEEN COMMONWEALTH STATUS AND INDEPENDENCE.

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